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## **BORIS VASILYEVICH ANAN'ICH (1931–2015): SKETCHES FOR A PORTRAIT**

The article is devoted to the research, teaching activities, and outstanding personality traits of the eminent Russian scientist, Doctor in History, professor, and academician Boris V. Anan'ich. He has conducted deep and comprehensive research of Russian economic and financial history of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, revealed the peculiarities of Russian capitalism, the role of banks in the economic and political development of Russia, the potential of the reformist government. According to Boris V. Anan'ich, Russia could hardly avoid the revolutionary upheavals of the early twentieth century. Boris Vasilievich found the ideological origins of the "people's autocracy theory" and gave it the detailed description. He was able to comprehensively analyse the economic system, political views and public activities of Sergei Witte. Boris V. Anan'ich conducted brilliant historical-source research into the so-called "Academic Case of 1929–1931", which was the basis for the repression of the most prominent Russian historians. Professor Boris Romanov has played a huge role in the fate of Boris V. Anan'ich. Boris Anan'ich in turn has taught a lot of competent and original researchers at St. Petersburg State University and the St. Petersburg Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Scientific-pedagogical activity of Boris Vasilievich became a professional and moral school for his disciples and followers. Refs 12.

**Keywords:** Boris Anan'ich, St. Petersburg Institute of History, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg State University, Boris A. Romanov, economic history, financial history, banks, Russian capitalism, Sergei Witte, 'the Academic Case', reform, government, revolution.

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## **БОРИС ВАСИЛЬЕВИЧ АНАНЬИЧ (1931–2015): ЭСКИЗЫ К ПОРТРЕТУ**

Статья посвящена научной, педагогической деятельности, незаурядным чертам личности выдающегося российского ученого, доктора исторических наук, профессора, академика Российской академии наук Б. В. Ананьича. Глубокие и всесторонние исследования Б. В. Ананьича по экономической и финансовой истории России конца XIX — начала XX в. позволили выявить особенности функционирования российского капитализма, роль банков в экономическом и политическом развитии России, оценить реформаторский потенциал правительства. По мнению Б. В. Ананьича, Россия едва ли могла избежать революционных потрясений в начале XX в. Борис Васильевич выяснил идейные истоки «теории народного самодержавия» и дал ей развернутую характеристику. Ему удалось всесторонне проанализировать экономическую систему, политические взгляды и государственную деятельность С. Ю. Витте. Блестящим историком-источниковедом Б. В. Ананьич выступил в изучении так называемого «Академическо-

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го дела 1929–1931 гг.», послужившего основанием для репрессий крупнейших отечественных историков. В судьбе Б.В.Ананьича огромную роль сыграл его учитель — профессор Борис Александрович Романов. Борис Васильевич Ананьич в свою очередь подготовил в Санкт-Петербургском государственном университете и Санкт-Петербургском институте истории Российской академии наук немало компетентных и оригинальных исследователей. Научно-педагогическая деятельность Бориса Васильевича стала профессиональной и нравственной школой для его учеников и последователей. Библиогр. 12 назв.

*Ключевые слова:* Борис Васильевич Ананьич, Санкт-Петербург, Институт истории, РАН, СПбГУ, Борис Александрович Романов, экономическая история, финансовая история, банки, российский капитализм, С.Ю.Витте, «Академического дело», реформы, правительство, революция.

The famous proverb “face to face you cannot see the features, to see what is great you need distance” cannot be applied to Boris Vasilyevich Anan’ich. All who have studied under him or had an opportunity to communicate with him in different, even most common everyday situations, could not but appreciate the scale of his personality as a historian, scholar, teacher and simply an individual.

The authors did not intend to give any extensive account of the creative legacy of Boris Vasilyevich. It is a challenge for the future. We hope that the current notes, so to call them, inspired by the personal impressions from the interaction with Boris Vasilyevich may be of a further help for his scholarly biography, adding to what has already been written about him [Ganelin, Paneyah, Fursenko 2003; Istoriiia Rossii: ekonomika, politika, chelovek 2011; Lebedev, Florinskii, Tsamutali 2015].

Boris Vasilyevich Anan’ich was born in Leningrad on March 4, 1931 to the family of serviceman. In 1948, after finishing secondary school, he entered the Faculty of History of the Leningrad State University choosing “History of international relations” as his major.

It was there that Professor B. A. Romanov — a renowned historian and specialist in Russian foreign policy and finances at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century — became Boris Vasilyevich’ teacher in a broad sense. In June 1953, he defended his graduate thesis and started working in the Leningrad Museum of Revolution and, in April 1956, he joined the staff of the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of History (the LBIH) of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. He rose through the ranks from a research associate to an academician of the RAS.

The LBIH saw the beginning of Boris Vasilyevich’s long and glorious path as a scholar. Under B. A. Romanov, he took part in preparing the collection of documents “Russian finances and the Euro-American financial market (1891–1914)”. The young researcher revealed a considerable mass of previously unknown documents on the topic in the archives of Leningrad and Moscow. The collection was finalised after the death of B. A. Romanov (June 1957), however, its publication was suspended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Ganelin, Paneyakh, Fursenko 2003, p. 4].



While preparing this collection Boris Vasilyevich acquired the invaluable experience of scholarly research. Source selection, research methods, all-around analysis — the principles of all these were fully adopted by him through collaboration with B. A. Romanov. It was then that Boris Vasilyevich's general line of scholarly endeavours — economic and financial history at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century — was defined.

In June 1961, Boris Vasilyevich successfully defended his thesis on the Anglo-Russian relations in Persia at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The collection “Russian Finances and the Euro-American Financial Market (1891–1914)” and a thorough investigation of the archives of the Ministry of Finance and Banking served as a basis for his fundamental monograph “Russia and International Capital. 1897–1914. Notes on the History of Financial Relations”. This book was published in 1970 and defended as a doctoral thesis [Anan'ich 1970].

Boris Vasilyevich made a considerable contribution to the study of the history of joint-stock banks, banking houses and their role in the economic and political development of Russia. In his monograph “Banking Houses in Russia. 1860–1914. Notes on the History of Private Enterprise”, he was one of the first in national historiography to study the activities of banking houses as a special form of private capitalistic enterprise. This approach revealed new features in the functioning of Russian capitalism [Anan'ich 1991, p. 5, 144, 151–152].

Participation in writing and editing the fundamental works on the Russian history “The Crisis of Autocracy in Russia. 1895–1917” and “Power and Reforms. From Autocracy to Soviet Russia” brought Boris Vasilyevich the deserved recognition from the colleagues both in Russia and internationally.

The monograph “Crisis of Autocracy in Russia. 1895–1917” that was published in the “late Soviet period” became a “most thorough research of political history of the last reign” of its time. Its chapters dedicated to the domestic policy of “the historical power” in the decade before the revolution of 1905–1907 were written by Boris Vasilyevich [Anan'ich, et al. 1984, pp. 11–54].

Following the traditions of St. Petersburg school of history, Boris Vasilyevich paid special attention to the facts, namely to the reformist potential of the government [Kulikov, Lukoyanov, Florinskii, Tsamutali 2014, p. 751]. The chapters prepared by Boris Vasilyevich's colleagues were written in the same vein. However, it did not make the book a kind of compendium. Selection, analysis, and synthesis of facts was most thorough, which shows not only in the observations and conclusions of the authors, but even more so in the structured outline of the facts, with ideology in the text being at a minimum. Owing to such an approach, the book provides an all-around idea of the main directions and consequences of the domestic policy of the government in the second half of the 1890s and the early 1900s, free from bias or attempting to impose a certain view on the reader.

It should be mentioned that some crucial aspects of the governmental policy at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (for example, the decentralisation of governmental control, zemstvo reform 1898–1903) had not been studied before the publication of “The Crisis of Autocracy in Russia. 1895–1917”. Boris Vasilyevich's research filled this gap [Anan'ich, et al. 1984, pp. 93–120, 137–150].

The research “Power and Reforms” holds a special place in the scholarly legacy of Boris Vasilyevich. This work was the result of studies of the leading researchers of St. Pe-

tersburg Institute of History over many years. The book offers a unified concept of Russia's development over the course of five centuries, which is undoubtedly Boris Vasilyevich's achievement as an editor-in-chief [Ganelin, Paneyakh, Fursenko 2003, p. 5–6]. The authors of this unique work did not only set but successfully solved the most difficult problem, i. e. to study the origin and development of autocracy in Russia, the rise, crisis and fall of the Russian empire [Anan'ich 1996, pp. 3–10].

In the foreword to the book, Boris Vasilyevich stated that 'it was the reforms as well as the current legislation that were to provide the natural development of the body of the state'. He was skeptical about the reformist potential of the 'historical power' and its ability to respond to the challenges of the time, as the reforms were 'limited, often forced', they were carried out 'without sufficient preparation both of the government and society' and did not affect 'the autocratic foundations of power' [Anan'ich 1996, p. 8].

Today, such notions might seem peremptory. However, Boris Vasilyevich's approach to studying national reformism was not limited to this. Pointing out that the reforms did not affect the foundations of autocratic power he noted the power's capacity for evolution. 'Reforms that were made in the economy and other spheres of state and social life reflected on the state and the prerogatives of the monarch one way or the other, and restricted his scope,' he wrote. 'Beginning with the reign of Catherine II autocracy had been losing despotic features. Russian autocrats took care not to give reason to be accused of tyranny' [Anan'ich 1996, p. 7].

The question whether Russia could have avoided the revolutionary turmoil, had the government implemented reforms, split the researchers into the pessimists and optimists (the problem will probably remain a subject of heated discussions for a long time). Boris Vasilyevich, as well as his coauthors of "The Crisis of Autocracy in Russia. 1895–1917", was more of a pessimist. Because of its tardiness and constraints, the reformism of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, he noted, "was not able to stop the revolutionary process". Withal, considering this problem, Boris Vasilyevich deemed peremptory terms impossible. Seeming to admit to some extent (at least, in this work) the soundness of the optimists' reasons, he emphasized that it was under the conditions of the World War I that the "choice of reform or revolution" was made in favour of the revolution" [Anan'ich 1996, p. 6].

In his chapters of *Power and Reform*, Boris Vasilyevich further developed the ideas expressed in "The Crisis of Autocracy in Russia 1895–1917". He gave special attention to "the theory of the autocracy of the people" that became the subject of a special study for the first time. According to Boris Vasilyevich, this theory, which established within the ruling circles after the regicide on 1 March, 1881, was based on the idea of the unity of the people and tsar. The bond between them was to be provided not by some institutional structures (e. g., zemstva or Zemski sobors, championed by the Slavophiles) but by the gentry [Anan'ich 1996, p. 380].

Discussing the position of the theory's adherents (notably, K. P. Pobedonostsev and M. N. Katkov), Boris Vasilyevich argued against the simplified interpretation of their views. The concept of the 'people's autocracy' ideologists was not limited to the primitive rejection of the liberal reforms of the 1860s–1870s. Boris Vasilyevich showed that 'the Katkov–Pobedonostsev party' developed a 'real political program of original development of Russia' according to which the autocracy was supposed to be reinforced by acceleration of national industry. Another conclusion of the author is also of importance: adepts of 'the theory of people's autocracy' did not ignore the strivings of the European

politicians and philosophers, who were skeptical about parliamentarism as a form of government. Thus, K. P. Pobedonostsev drew on the works of T. Carlyle and M. Nordau [Anan'ich, p. 381–382].

Boris Vasilyevich made a considerable contribution to the study of conservative reformism in Russia at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century [Lebedev, Florinskii, Tsamutali 2015, p. 234]. He was the first to study the project of state-legal reorganisation of the Russian empire prepared at the beginning of the 1900s by S. F. Sharapov, editor of the newspaper 'Russkoe Delo', who considered himself a successor of a noted Slavophil, I. S. Aksakov. The project was inspired by the Slavophil socio-political ideals and offered, on the one hand, to deliver the monarch from the influence of "the bureaucratic partition" and, on the other hand, not to allow that this "deliverance" should happen through the transition to a constitutional order. In view of that, S. F. Sharapov insisted on the fundamental reorganisation of the central and local rule in Russia [Anan'ich 1996, p. 427].

The results of Boris Vasilyevich's studies made a significant change in the historiographical notions of the domestic political course on the eve of the 1905–1907 revolution. Historiography had traditionally considered the policy of the minister of home affairs V. K. Plehve 'from the perspective of the struggle with social movements'. Boris Vasilyevich showed that V. K. Plehve understood "the necessity of a broader involvement of the census society in state affairs". Among other things, this position of the minister reflected in the so-called 'Plehve constitution' — the creation of the Council of Local Economies where representatives of local self-governing bodies were to take part [Lebedev, Florinskii, Tsamutali 2015, p. 234].

During the many years of his scholarly studies, Boris Vasilyevich turned to the political legacy and memoirs of a major Russian statesman of the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, S. Iu. Witte. In a number of publications, Boris Vasilyevich analysed Witte's views on politics and economy as well as his activity as a finance minister. Boris Vasilyevich might have been the first among modern Russian researchers who obtained access to the manuscript of Witte's memoirs at the Columbia University, USA. The commented edition of his memoirs, published by Boris Vasilyevich and his colleagues from St. Petersburg Institute of History [Anan'ich, et al. 2003; Shorthand Notes 2003], together with a monograph 'S. Iu. Vitte and His Time' (in co-authorship with R. S. Ganelin) [Anan'ich, Ganelin 2000] crowned his studies of Witte's manifold activities.

The range of Boris Vasilyevich's academic interests was extremely broad and frequently included topics that at first glance seemed far from his main lines of research. In the early 1990s, he took part in the studying and publishing of the records of the so-called "Academic affair 1929–1931" that had triggered the repressions against major national historians mostly of the pre-revolutionary St. Petersburg school. In this work, Boris Vasilyevich proved his remarkable qualities as a source expert.

For 45 years (but for a short interval), from 1969 onwards, Boris Vasilyevich was a professor at the Faculty of History, now the Institute of History of St. Petersburg State University. He gave lectures on the history of Russia in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, delivered special courses such as 'Memoirs as a source on the history of Russia from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century', 'Foreign affairs of Russia from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century', and chaired a special seminar 'Russian domestic policy at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century' at the Department of the USSR History (now Department of Russian History from Ancient Times to the 20<sup>th</sup> century).

Boris Vasilyevich's special course 'Memoirs as a source of the Russian history from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century' evoked great interest among undergraduate and post-graduate students. The lecture hall was invariably full to capacity. Like his other courses, this one was based on the results of his own research, and thus inspired the listeners to independent academic studies.

Boris Vasilyevich's observations and conclusions helped to elucidate the nature of memoirs, journals and diaries as a source and rendered their simplified interpretation impossible. 'Yes,' noted Boris Vasilyevich as if resorting to the usual arguments on the subjectivity of the memoir genre, 'they [the sources] are subjective like any other source but that is why memoirs and diaries are of special interest to the researcher, although the tasks standing before the historian are not simple.' Revealing their significance as a source, Boris Vasilyevich conveyed the vivid characteristics of their authors. The audience had the impression of passing through a gallery of portraits of outstanding statesmen (S. Iu. Witte, V. N. Kokovtsov, D. I. Shipov, P. N. Milyukov and others) and being immersed in the political atmosphere of the last decades of the Russian empire.

Boris Vasilyevich charmed and stunned those around him with his enthusiasm and dedication to his profession. His brilliant lectures and the creative air of his special seminar educated his disciples academically and morally. Associate professor of the Department of Russian History Source Studies of the Institute of History SPbSU, N. M. Korneva remembers: 'When a student, my senior fellows answered to my question about lecturers: "If you want to learn to work with documents, then it's Anan'ich!" At the first sessions of the seminar it became clear that you could not only learn how to work with documents but also "train to be a scholar". [...] You had to learn to write again. The strict requirements being justified and the invariable respect to students invoked an ardent desire to do your best [Istoriia Rossii: ekonomika, politika, chelovek, 2011, p. 9].'

Boris Vasilyevich was an exacting teacher. His students had to present chapters of their papers on a regular basis. He discussed them in detail, paying attention not only to the content but to the style as well, insisting on the precision of formulation and conclusions. One of the authors of this paper, while being a post-graduate student, once asked him if it was worth focusing on a certain subject, which seemed minor to the young researcher. 'It is,' replied Boris Vasilyevich, 'we historians are mostly not read at all, but if we are, then it is with a magnifying glass.' This was an answer of an accomplished professional and a true scholar, for whom objectivity and thoroughness were the highest criteria of research.

In his last years Boris Vasilyevich chaired a special seminar on the history of economy and domestic policy of Russia in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century at the Department of History of Enterprise and Management of the Faculty of History. He was generous in sharing knowledge with students. His health failed him at times, but as long as he had the strength to teach, he was an exceptionally responsible lecturer. A former student of the department, A. A. Puzin recalls: 'Before the first class we were anxious, and understandably so: an academician, a top expert, a historian with the capital H. From the very start Boris Vasilyevich trained us to work in a both academic and friendly atmosphere. He gave attention to everybody. You felt at ease. He was free and convincing when he talked about different aspects of research, showing the students the weak points in their work, outlining means of improvement. [...] The most important thing was that he came to the classes to hear the students, to understand what moves them and to capture their interest with new topics.'

S. Bondarev, PhD in History, of the younger generation of Boris Vasilyevich's disciples, gives the following account: 'Boris Vasilyevich's demeanour encouraged a productive dialogue. [...] A highly cultured person, he always addressed us "colleagues" and by name and patronymic. Boris Vasilyevich suggested that everyone made a talk on their paper. After each talk, he invited us to discuss its strengths and weaknesses. [...] We tried to get as much knowledge from this wise man as we could. At the end of the seminar, Boris Vasilyevich wished us all success in our academic studies and, to my great joy, said that we could always ask him for advice and help.' The founder and leader of an authoritative academic school, Boris Vasilyevich Anan'ich never refused consultation and guidance to any researcher, young or mature. Among his disciples, who are more than a hundred, are professors of Russian, American, Korean and Japanese universities. Most lecturers of the Institute of History of St. Petersburg University can proudly say, 'I studied under Boris Vasilyevich Anan'ich.'

Boris Vasilyevich's personal charisma and character showed in small and big ways. Those who visited his home will always remember his hospitality and care for his guests.

Boris Vasilyevich Anan'ich passed away on July 20, 2015. A historian with a worldwide reputation, academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, chief researcher at St. Petersburg Institute of History RAS, professor of St. Petersburg University, a person of immense knowledge and experience, of amazing tact, charisma and modesty, a quintessential literatus, he will always remain in the memory of his colleagues and disciples. New generations of historians will come to study his fundamental and pioneering works and will say as we do, 'I studied under Boris Vasilyevich Anan'ich.' The link between times and between generations of historians is indissoluble as was Boris Vasilyevich's link with his teachers.

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